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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Communist China

SUBJECT Port Information: Whampoa

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REPORT NO.

RESP	
1	
CD NO.	
OO/C NO.	
ORR NO.	
DAS NO.	
OCI NO.	

DATE DISTR. 16, July 54

NO. OF PAGES 3

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPP. TO
REPORT NO.

1. Security Measures During Approach to Whampoa During the voyage to Whampoa, the vessel was anchored at Lafsami Island (about 50 miles from Whampoa). The vessel was required to remain there, at anchor, for about 36 hours. During this time, customs and military guards boarded the vessel and conducted a search, which lasted for about four hours. No special equipment was observed as being used in conjunction with the search. Two Chinese military guards, who were armed with automatic weapons, remained on the vessel until it arrived at Whampoa. All of the members of the boarding party remained very aloof while aboard the vessel and no attempt was made to become friendly with the crew. Before leaving the anchorage at Lafsami Island, a Chinese pilot came aboard the vessel. All of the ship's navigational equipment was sealed and placed under guard. Part of the radio was removed in order to prevent any transmissions from the ship. The crew was not permitted to make soundings and the pilot had the only pair of binoculars; therefore, it was virtually impossible to gather or plot any hydrographic information.
2. Details Concerning Unloading The Chinese males, who performed the labor in unloading the vessel, lived in a houseboat which was brought alongside the vessel. The winches and booms of the vessel were used to transfer the cargo bags to the lighters which had been placed alongside. [redacted] that it was his understanding that the cargo was shipped to Canton by junk and sampan. Before leaving Lafsami Island, enough of the cargo was unloaded to decrease the draft to 26 feet (about seven inches). The laborers appeared to be very afraid of the two military guards, who also acted as supervisors of the unloading, and would not associate with or speak to members of the crew in their presence. At other times, they would accept cigarettes; however, they appeared very fearful of being detected. None of the laborers resembled occidentals. From Lafsami

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Island, the vessel was moved to the second bar. At this point the vessel remained at anchor for about two days and was again partially unloaded into lighters, reducing the draft to 21 feet. The next move was to Whampoa, where the vessel anchored (using both bowers) about 300 yards off shore and west of Whampoa. Five days were spent at Whampoa while the remaining cargo was unloaded into lighters. Part of this unloading was conducted at night.

3. Security at Whampoa The two Chinese military guards, who had been on board since the arrival of the vessel at Laisami Island, were relieved when the ship arrived at Whampoa. The guards assigned to the vessel were given 12 hour tours of duty and a continuous watch was maintained. The crew of the vessel was permitted to go ashore in Whampoa.

4. Merchant Activity Several merchant vessels were observed at Whampoa. A Swedish merchantman (either a Victory or a C-3 hull) was anchored off Whampoa and was observed to be unloading trucks and buses. [redacted] could recall the name of this vessel; however, they understood that it was on a regular run between Gdynia and Chir. A Polish merchantman was alongside a concrete bulkhead (see overlay to HO 2532) and was noted to be unloading steel plates, machinery and automobiles. [redacted] that the name of this vessel was "something like JEZNIC." An Italian merchantman was at anchor (overlay to HO 2532) and apparently in ballast. The hull of this vessel was being chipped and painted. Neither informant could recall the name.

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5. Naval Activity Several small patrol craft were observed operating in the Whampoa area. These vessels did not appear to be functioning as harbor patrols, but appeared to be more on the order of training vessels. Since the Chinese have a Naval School at Whampoa, [redacted] that these vessels were probably used in conjunction with it. One vessel which passed close aboard to the informants' ship appeared to be a minesweeper. The vessel had a wooden hull, was about 100 feet long and carried several floats on the stern. The superstructure was cylindrical and was located amidship. One of the informants stated that the vessel was on the order of the US LCI-type. He added that no radar or radio aerials were visible, but that three objects (apparently metal) were secured on each side of the superstructure. The informants furnished a reproduction of a rough sketch, drawn by them, of these objects. No Chinese or Soviet naval vessels or submarines were sighted on the voyage to or from Whampoa.

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6. Port Facilities A concrete bulkhead had been built parallel to the shore at Whampoa (overlay to HO 2532). [redacted] that it was about 200 yards long and stated that the Chinese agent had informed him that it was planned to have it extended several hundred more yards easterly. The Polish merchantman, mentioned in paragraph 4, was berthed at this bulkhead, and portable power cranes were observed being used in the unloading. Neither informant could comment on the storage facilities in this area.

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7. Chinese Agent The Chinese agent was reported as being shrewd and intelligent. He spent much of his time aboard the vessel and was said to have continually talked about getting cooperation from the ship regarding the use of the ship's cranes and other cargo-handling equipment. On several occasions, the agent began political conversations, during which he praised China's rise under Communism. [redacted] however, was aware of any attempt on his part or any of the others to collect information regarding areas or activities outside of China. No attempt was made to disseminate Communist propaganda or other literature to the crew.

Observations in Whampoa [redacted] who went ashore in Whampoa, stated that transportation was provided to the jetty (overlay to HO 2532) by sampan. On their arrival at the jetty, a Chinese woman checked the crew's papers and recorded their time of arrival. The procedure was repeated when they departed. No areas appeared to be under military guard and the crew was

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permitted to move about the city freely. [redacted] did not remain ashore very long; therefore, his observations were limited. He saw only orientals while ashore and had difficulty in distinguishing the civilians from the military, due to their similar clothing. Much Soviet equipment (machinery and trucks) was observed and some new construction (apartment houses) was noted. After entering a government cooperative store, the informant was not impressed with the items available. Several radio loudspeakers were operating in various locations and political posters were observed throughout the city.

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9. Miscellaneous Information No dredging operations were observed while either entering or leaving Whampoa. No evidence of either submarine nets or mined areas was noted. Several small aircraft were observed over the Whampoa area, however, the informants did not believe that these were military aircraft. As the vessel entered the Canton River, two British Vampire aircraft flew over the ship and the informants stated that they were over Chinese territory at the time. The mast headlights of about four small craft in a column were observed in the Canton River as the ship was departing. Due to the manner in which they were operating, the informants believed that they were the same small craft mentioned in paragraph 5. During the vessel's previous visit to Tsingtao (in about October 1953), one informant observed a Chinese destroyer (which he believed was a Japanese HAKODATE class frigate). A small submarine (smaller than the British fleet type, but not a midget), which was very streamlined, was tied up alongside the destroyer. It was not known whether the submarine was snorkel equipped and no identifying markings or other data could be recalled.

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[redacted]

[On file in CIA Library are overlay to HO 2532 (Whampoa to Canton) and sketch of unknown object, referred to in paragraph 5.]

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